those newspapers which could not get the required quota of newsprint from STC during the above period ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) STC has imported 23,000 MTs (approx) of newsprint during 1993-94.

(b) to (d) Prior to 1-4-1992, STC had been the canalising agency for import of newsprint. However, w.e.f. 1-4-1992, import of newsprint has been decanalised and STC is no longer a canalising agency for import of this commodity. Under the decanalised regime, actual users are allowed to import newsprint directly by themselves or through newsprint handling agents based on the entitlement certificates issued by the Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI) under the administrative control of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Effect of E.U.'s Generalised System of preferences on Exports

755. SHRI G. Y. KRISHNAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the European Union's revised Generalised System of Preferences, scheduled to come into force from January 1, 1995 is likely to effect Indian exports, particularly in the sphere of protection of intellectual property rights.

(b) if so, how does Government propose to face rough weather over IPR and other commitments to labour standards and environment; and

(c) what is its ultimate impact on India's exports of textiles, apparels, leather, carpets and other products ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (c) The European Commission submitted a proposal for a three-year scheme of generalised tariff preferences from 1995 to 1997 for industrial products originating in developing countries to the Council of the European Union on 19th September, 1994. The Commission's proposal does not include the scope of GSP access with protection of intellectual property rights. The proposal, however, provides that beneficiary countries could avail of, on request, with effect from 1st January, 1997, "Special incentive arrangements" for conformance with certain international labour and environmental standards.

2. The Commission proposed that the new regulation would enter into force on 1st January, 1995. The proposal is yet to be adopted by the Council.

3. The central elements of the Commission's proposal are tariff "modulation" and "graduation". As per the modulation proposal, the existing volume restrictions in the form of fixed duty-free amounts and ceilings would be replaced by tariff modulation reflecting the sensitively of different sectors (products or groups of products). The eligible products would be categorised into sensitive, semi-sensitive and non-sensitive sectors (products) and these would be subject to different rates of preferential duty. Under the new graduation policy, beneficiary countries which have achieved a degree of trade specialisation in certain sectors will be denied GSP for those sectors. While applying graduation in addition to the trade specialisation criterion, development factor would be taken into account.

4. The proposals, if accepted, are likely to affect a number of countries including India, Hongkong, Singapore, South Korea, China, Thailand, Malaysia, Brazil, Argentina, Pakistan and Indonesia. The likely effects cannot be assessed until the new scheme becomes available.